

524 Dice are three splints of cane; tapering toward both ends, nearly flat. The concave inside is greenish white, the outside darker. The count is: 0 insides up, win 4; 1 inside up, win 1; 2 insides up, lose 1 and play; 3 insides up, lose 4. The 3 splints are stacked together, then thrown endwise against the palm, a piece of turtle shell, or anything similar, so as to fly forward and scatter on the ground. (Some players probably acquire a degree of skill in making the canes fall right.) A player repeats until he throws 2 whites or insides. For points scored, he draws lines on the ground in front of himself. His opponent erases his lines as he wins, or adds to them as he loses, until he himself is ahead, when he begins to mark his own lines. Ten points wins the game. A stick is then set in the ground by the winner, who goes on playing the next game. That is, if he has 8, and throws 4, he sets up his stick, erases 6 lines so as to start the new game with a credit of 2, and throws again. The Seri perform these additions and subtractions with the rapidity of a practiced white man.

A ring of people may play at once. Their scoring in relation to one another was not ascertained, but it is presumably each from his neighbor, with the totals shown by sticks.

Since with fair throws the losses in this game must equal gains, a lead of 10 over an opponent is as much as could expectably be played for if the game were not to be unduly protracted.

526 Football race is played with *palo fierro* balls, perhaps 3 inches in diameter, one to each side of 4 runners. The ball may be moved only with the foot. The race is along the beach, where cactus and brush do not interfere. The distance, according to places named to Sr. Thomson and known to him, is about 6 miles. The men on a side relieve each other in informal relays; usually only 1 or 2 finish. The Seri once went north to play the Papago this game, but lost.

[648] Shiny is a woman's game, preliminary to the football race. Four women to a side carry sticks with which they try to throw an 8-12 inch hoop to a goal mark at the end of a short field. Behind each side stand the 4 men runners who are to race with a ball.

Notes on Material Culture

482 Women carry loads on their heads with a ring: men with the *pén*, Spanish *palanca* or lever, a stick over the shoulder, with load hung from each end. These are the usual Sonora and Sinaloa Indian ways of carrying.

[171] The Seri sit and lounge randomly. The men squat, occasionally cross the legs, put them sidewise, or sit with one knee up. The women wear long cloth skirts, but apparently sit just as variously.

516 Body armor, *naitanika p*, with sleeves and helmet, and a shield. 714 *saXetX*, both of hide, were worn. The shield was described as 4 or 5 feet high, roof-shaped toward the front. It is not clear whether

it was set up by an archer in front of himself, or carried for him by another man. At any rate it suggests open fighting besides raids and ambushes. 714 ●

Pottery, which is thin, porous, and reddish-buff to gray, was not seen made. The clay is said to be tempered with jackrabbit or horse dung. The vessel is started, apparently by coiling, in a dish or receptacle. It is certainly built up by coiling, the sausages being somewhat less than the thickness of a finger. It dries fast, the bottom becoming somewhat hard as the top is being built. The coils are smoothed as they are added, with a stone inside, a shell to scrape the outside. A paddle is not used. The vessel is further smoothed with the stone and dried for a day. It is fired with wood, sufficient manure being un- 323
[372] available on the island.

is what their "shirt" (McGee, pl. 29) probably was. The fabrics of McGee's Mexican informant may refer to gunny-sacks made over into improvised imitations of civilized garments; or to single-element carrying bags. It is entirely possible that contact with the cloth-weaving tribes of Sonora long ago induced the Seri to shrink from habitual complete nudity; but it is difficult to imagine them producing even a coarse wearable cloth. McGee's interpretation of the historic sequence of Seri garments is of course wholly speculative. 114 29/ [439]

The cradle shown by McGee (p. 226, fig. 30) consists of a kite-shaped hoop with eight sticks tied across it and a lashing thong passed back and forth across it half-a-dozen times. Even allowing for some slip of the parts in transport to Washington, this specimen is quite typical in Seri disregard of evenness, neatness, order, or finish. The Yaqui cradle illustrated by Hrdlička¹ consists of eight or nine lengthwise sticks or canes twined close together. The Lower Californians used a basket or a turtleshell. The Gila Pima and river Yuman cradle is of "ladder" type, and therefore similar in structure to the Seri except that it lacks the point at the bottom and has the sides parallel; it also carries a hood of wickered or twilled splints. As regards basic structure, one form of Maidu cradle is most similar to the Seri; just as the plan of the Yaqui one reappears among Miwok, Yokuts, and Mono a little further south in California.² It appears from this irregular distribution that so simple an apparatus as the open or flat baby-carrier, which can be just as serviceable without a definite technique or style entering into it, is likely to vary locally without much significance, and that its forms will indicate historic connection only when they are parallel in a number of details. In these respects it resembles house types. In both these objects, new "inventions," certainly of detail elements and perhaps of basic structure, seem to be readily made and adopted. 114 171 854

McGee's finding (p. 247) that the Seri are "not habitual stone arrow-makers" has a parallel among the river Yumans, and, at least partially, among the remaining Sonoran tribes. His conclusion (p. 259) that the *yerba de la flecha* (magot, *Sebastiania bilocularis*?) was an Opata but probably not a Seri arrow poison, seems sound. The plant was shown me on the island, and the Seri knew it as venomous, but volunteered nothing as to using it on arrows. 114 171 278 411

That the question of Seri cannibalism must be left open, with a preponderance of evidence against the practice (p. 263), also seems a conservative judgment. [266]

As to shields, McGee learned of loose pelican pelts and turtleshells (p. 264), I of armor and a large upright shield of hide. Both accounts may be right, one referring to emergency pick-ups, the other to prepared defence or attack. 114 714 ●

¹ AA 2, pl. 2, 1896.

² BAE-B 75:632, fig. 42, pls. 29, 48.